

# THE DAY BOOK

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**WHEN WE WANT WAR.**—In the broadest, highest moral sense, all war is dishonorable. After all the centuries of civilization, intellectual progress, Christian endeavor and experience with the folly of war, it is dishonorable to men that they cannot settle all their differences without reversion to the policy of brutes—mutual annihilation, or mutilation.

But there is still a limit to the possibilities of peaceful settlement of demands and disputes, a limit beyond which refusal to fight is more dishonorable than war. There is no living thing, in animal or vegetable world, that is not equipped with means for combatting enemies of its perfect development—call it ideals, in the case of mankind.

Nations are but collections of individuals—segregations due sometimes to color, sometimes to language, sometimes to climate, sometimes to nature's physical features, sometimes to necessity for expansion, but all brothers. And the ideals of our nation are promotion and preservation of the God-given rights of man, and peace and good will toward all other nations. The torch in the hand of Bartholdi's "Liberty" is not solely a sign to the immigrant that ours is a land strong for the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; it is not solely a beacon for incoming pilots. It is, in addition, a proclamation of enlight-

enment to the whole world, a message of high national aspiration and example given the outgoing foreigner to bear into all the corners of the earth.

War is so horrible, so dishonorable, so foolish that we should make any sacrifice to avoid it, up to the point of immolating our national ideals—ourselves.

"Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness!" We speak of these as our national ideals. We have founded a nation upon them as our "inalienable rights," and maintain the doctrine that they are the natural rights of all men, everywhere. We must fight for them, die for them, if necessary, or perish as a nation with them. What are they, as concerns our relations with the belligerents of Europe? We offer this:

That Americans have a right to travel and trade upon the waters of the earth, whenever and wherever not conflicting with the rights of other nations. Every right, individual or national, has its limitation at the line of conflict with the rights of others.

Would our dispute over the Lusitania matter justify war with Germany? Germany was clearly within her rights in sinking an enemy ship. The inhumanity and immorality of the method are not our affair. We cannot go to war to force Germany to our standard of morality.

International rights are created by international law, the formal agreement of nations. The fact that there is no international law to adequately cover aerial or submarine warfare deprives no nation of the right to make such warfare. Nor can we go to war, without too great dishonor, because the exigencies of such warfare occasionally preclude search, investigation, warning before decisive action. Our ideals can be conserved by keeping Americans off belligerent ships. Peace and our ideals are more precious than the lives of a thousand Americans and the Americans who